

Public Law 101-345
101st Congress

Joint Resolution

Designating August 6, 1990, as "Voting Rights Celebration Day".

Aug. 7, 1990
[H.J. Res. 625]

Whereas the 15th amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees the right of all citizens of the United States to vote without regard to their race or color;

Whereas, for nearly a century, the Government of the United States failed to enforce effectively the 15th amendment, thus denying African-Americans the right to exercise their voting franchise;

Whereas, in the absence of voting rights legislation, violence, harassment, intimidation, unfair tests, and other barriers to participation denied millions of United States citizens empowerment and enfranchisement in the political process;

Whereas the enactment of effective voting rights legislation was a priority of the civil rights movement for which many gave their lives;

Whereas President Lyndon Johnson declared on March 15, 1965, before a Joint Session of Congress that "every American citizen must have an equal right to vote," and that "there is no duty which weighs more heavily on us than the duty we have to insure that right";

Whereas bipartisan majorities in the House of Representatives and the Senate overwhelmingly approved the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and President Johnson signed the Act into law in a ceremony in the rotunda of the United States Capitol on August 6, 1965;

Whereas the Voting Rights Act of 1965 has been the most effective civil rights legislation for changing discriminatory practices that denied African-American, Hispanic-American, Native-American, Asian-American and other minority voters their most basic democratic rights, the right to vote and the opportunity to elect the persons they most want to represent them;

Whereas Congress has extended the Voting Rights Act of 1965 on three occasions because of its great effectiveness in expanding voter registration among minority citizens, increasing the number of African-American, Hispanic-American, Native-American, Asian-American and other minority elected officials, and causing greater and intrinsically valuable discourse between candidates for elective office and voters of all races and colors; and

Whereas August 6, 1990, marks the 25th anniversary of the enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That August 6, 1990, is designated as "Voting Rights Celebration Day", and the President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation reminding the people of the United States of—

- (1) the historic struggle to provide all citizens of the United States with an equal and unencumbered right to vote;
- (2) the need to register to vote and participate in elections;

(3) the importance of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the need for its continued enforcement; and

(4) the value of the vote to all citizens as an instrument of self-government and justice in a democratic society.

Approved August 7, 1990.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.J. Res. 625:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 136 (1990):

July 31, considered and passed House.

Aug. 1, considered and passed Senate.